

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05414 030633Z
ACTION CU-03

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R 021604Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHC 4221
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

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E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SCUL, US, GE
SUBJECT: DURER PAINTINGS

REF: BERLIN 7152

1. EDWARD SPRAGUE JONES, REPRESENTING ARTEMIS S.A. WITH
REFERENCE TO LITIGATION INVOLVING TWO DURER PAINTINGS, AND
WHO HAD WRITTEN CHARGE REQUESTING APPOINTMENT WITH
APPROPRIATE GDR AUTHORITY, VISITED EAST BERLIN AND WEIMAR
FEBRUARY 18-25. APPOINTMENT WAS MADE WITH DR. MANFRED
HOFFMAN, IN CHARGE OF GDR INTERNATIONAL CIVIL LAW CASES,
WHO PREDICATED TO PAO THAT CHANCES FOR SETTLEMENT VIRTUALLY
NIL BUT HAD NO OBJECTION SEEING JONES. THREE-HOUR
MEETING TOOK PLACE FEBRUARY 21, JONES TAKING NOTES - WHICH
HE LATER ALLOWED EMBASSY TO COPY - AND HOFFMANN RUNNING
TAPE RECORDER. JONES FOUND HOFFMANN ARTICULATE, KNOWLEDGEABLE
AND TOUGH ADVOCATE. MAIN POINTS FOLLOWS.

2. GDR HAS RETAINED HARRY RAND OF BOTKIN, SKLAR AND HAYS
WHO IS DUE TO ARRIVE BERLIN MARCH 8. JONES SAID HE HAS
REFUSED TO DEAL WITH RAND AND THAT SETTLEMENT POSSIBLE
ONLY BY PRINCIPALS, WHEN JONES SUGGESTED FURTHER
COMMUNICATION BE DONE THROUGH PAO, HOFFMAN APPARENTLY
RECOILED, SAYING IT UNPRECEDENTED. (JONES SAID THAT
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HE WOULD NEVERTHELESS SEND COPIES OF ALL FUTURE
CORRESPONDENCE TO EMBASSY).

3. JONES TOLD HOFFMANN THAT GRAND DUCHESS HAD STRONGER
CASE BUT THAT IF EITHER SHE OR US LITIGANT ELICOFON WON,
GDR WOULD IN EITHER CASE BE LOSER. THEREFORE, HE
RECOMMENDE SETTLEMENT THROUGH BARTER, WHICH WAS HIS

MAIN REASON FOR PRESENT DISCUSSION, HE SUGGESTED THAT HOFFMAN MIGHT FIND IT MORE FRUITFUL DISCUSS ITEMS FOR BARTER RATHER THAN PURSUE SUIT.

4. HOFFMAN DISPLAYED SUSPICION OF JONES AND KEPT ASKING WHO WAS PAYING HIM, BUT NEVERTHELESS HEARD HIM OUT. HE MAINTAINED THAT IF SETTLEMENT EFFECTED, FRUITS THEREOF WOULD GO TO WEIMAR MUSEUM.

5. COMMENT: JONES' ATTITUDE AND REPLIES OUR QUESTIONS WERE EVASIVE AND HIS NOTES CONFUSING, WITH REFERENCE TO PERSONALITIES AND LEGAL MANEUVERS WITH WHICH WE ARE UNFAMILIAR. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES, EMBASSY PREPARED POUCH COPIES OF JONES' FOUR PAGES OF HAND-WRITTEN NOTES. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

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